

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, October 20, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Green Tomatoes." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

-----o-----

One of my friends who has a flourishing vegetable garden told me the other day that she always dreaded the arrival of Jack Frost in the fall.

"I don't mind the other plants so much," she says, "but I do hate to see the cold settle down on the tomato vines. They're always covered with lovely green tomatoes that would ripen in no time. And of course these all go to waste."

"What?" said I. "Don't you use your green tomatoes?"

"Use them?" asked my friend. "Why, I didn't suppose green tomatoes were good for anything."

You'd be surprised how many good dishes you can make with green tomatoes, how many different ways you can serve them to your family. Why leave them on the vines until some cold night comes along and ruins them? Bring them in before they freeze and serve them to the family.

You can use some of your green tomatoes for pickles. Others, you can cut in half-inch slices, sprinkle with salt, dip in flour or fine bread crumbs, and fry until tender in a little fat. Or, you can fry them with sliced onions.

Many of the favorite ways of fixing ripe tomatoes also do for green tomatoes. For example, plain stewed green tomatoes are delicious. So is cream of green tomato soup. That tastes much like the popular cream of tomato soup with the pinkish color. Only, when you use green tomatoes, the soup naturally has a green tint.

Have you ever heard of green tomato pie? Have you ever made green tomato marmalade with tomatoes, sugar, lemons and a bit of salt? And do you know that green tomatoes make mincemeat to the queen's taste if you mix them with chopped apples, raisins, currants, citron, brown sugar and lots of spice?

Now, if any of you let your green tomatoes go to waste on the vines this fall, don't blame me for it. I believe in being thrifty and using up these good vegetables whether they're small or large, or ripe or unripe.

Where's your pencil? Have you one nearby? Good. Then I can give you the recipe for green tomato marmalade, I promised. This makes a fine spread for many occasions during the winter. It's very good with hot biscuits.

Only four ingredients: 6 pounds of green tomatoes
 6 cups of sugar
 1 and 1/2 teaspoons of salt, and
 6 lemons

Once more. (Repeat)

First, wash and trim the tomatoes and cut them into small pieces. Then add the sugar. Cut the lemons into very fine slices and boil them for about five minutes in a cup of water to which the salt has been added. Now add this to the tomatoes and sugar. Heat the mixture slowly. Then cook rapidly, stirring constantly for about a half an hour--or until the marmalade has the consistency of thick, heavy jam. These proportions will make about three quarts of marmalade.

Tomatoes have an interesting history. Not so many years ago tomato plants grew in the garden or in a pot in the window for ornament and curiosity only. People considered them very poisonous. In some old records in Trenton, New Jersey, dated less than a hundred years ago, the story of a little girl named Elizabeth Clark who was caught eating tomatoes and was promptly rushed to a doctor. Her parents thought she was poisoned and would probably die. I have often heard my own grandmother say that when she was a small girl she was taught to call tomatoes "love apples" and was warned against them as very poisonous.

Isn't that the way things go in this world? Once considered poisonous; now considered good food even for babies. The nutritionists tell us nowadays that tomatoes are some of the most valuable vegetables we have. No other single vegetable for its cost contributes vitamins and minerals so generously.

Many child-nutrition specialists advise tomato juice for children every day unless they eat plenty of citrus fruit. Either tomatoes or citrus fruit supply the child with the vitamin C that he needs.

You know, that vitamin C is called the antiscorbutic vitamin. That's because a lack of it in the diet causes that well-known disease called scurvy. When children don't have enough foods containing this vitamin, they lack stamina, and they don't grow normally. More than this, too little vitamin C is thought to be an important factor in the prevalence of tooth decay and in much of the so-called rheumatism in both children and adults.

The best sources of this vitamin are tomatoes, citrus fruits and raw cabbage and turnips. Because the body can't store vitamin C in any quantity, we all need it every day. But vitamin C is not the only good reason for the importance of tomatoes in our diet. Tomatoes are also a good source of vitamins A and B and they contain several important minerals. ^{of}

Because of the low cost, many hospitals and families use tomato juice instead of orange juice in the daily diet of infants and very young children. Fortunately the supply of vitamin C in tomatoes isn't reduced enough to count even when the tomatoes are cooked or canned.

Tomorrow we'll plan a fireside dinner or an indoor picnic.

